



CARE PROGRAM 2010

CONSOLIDATED ASSISTANCE REVIEW AND EVALUATION

<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/programs/CARE/index.htm>

CHARTER

I. PURPOSE

The primary goal of the CARE Program will be to concentrate on assisting those reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations and how to actually make the necessary changes to improve. While accomplishing this objective, CARE Teams will perform a limited review of administrative and financial activities in accordance with requirements of the Federal Managers Federal Integrity Act and Departmental Regulation No. 2100-001. <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DR2100-001.pdf>

The CARE Program includes the review of all operational/management activities of an organizational unit through a consolidated approach that will provide sufficient assurance about the effectiveness and efficiency of administrative and financial management activities performed.

The CARE Program will meet the minimum assurance requirements of OMB Circular A-123 (Internal Control Systems), A-127 (Financial Management Systems), A-130 (Management of Federal Information Resources), and applicable Executive Orders. These Circulars and Executive Orders and other Federal regulations provide the policies and guidance Federal employees are to follow in successfully performing their duties.

The objectives of the CARE Program will be to:

- Assist, in a helpful and proactive way, those being reviewed to understand what can be done to improve their operations.
- Help those being reviewed to interpret and understand current policy and procedure guidance.
- Identify gaps in available guidance/policy/procedures that require attention in order to meet the needs of Location activities.
- Promote efficiency, economy and responsiveness to program needs through the identification of trends and the sharing of ideas and techniques for improving administrative processes.
- Assure compliance with Federal policies and regulations by officially designated employees.

II. COORDINATION AND INTERACTION

The Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Financial Management (AFM) will provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program. The DAAFM Management Analyst will serve as the CARE Program Manager.

The Deputy Administrator, AFM, and the CARE Program Manager will interact with the AFM Divisions, Area Directors (ADs), Deputy Area Directors (DADs), and Location managers through meetings, reports, and requests.

The CARE Program Manager will report any material weaknesses as defined in OMB Circular A-123, to the appropriate AFM Division and ARS Management Control Official located in FMD.

III. MEMBERSHIP

CARE Team members will be selected from Area and Location level administrative offices, and branches of the AFM Divisions. Individuals selected will be those who have successfully demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities required to be a member of the CARE Program. These qualities include: aptitude and willingness to learn outside of one's functional expertise, demonstrated teamwork and communication skills, objectivity, and adaptability to a dynamic environment. CARE Team members serve for 3-year terms, resulting in one-third of the CARE Program membership changing yearly.

Each CARE Team typically consists of eight members, organized as follows:

Two Administrative Officers/Technicians.

Four functional experts, chosen from the following areas of expertise:

Information Technology
Human Resources
Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM)

Two additional members, chosen from the following groups:

- Administrative Officers/Technicians
- Research Leader Secretaries
- Extramural Agreements functional experts
- Budget and Fiscal functional experts
- Procurement and Property functional experts

The goal of CARE Team composition is to achieve as much balance between Headquarters, Area, and Location representation as possible without compromising functional specialties or the issues and needs of the Locations being reviewed. In addition, the CARE Program Manager reserves

the right to increase or decrease the size of the CARE Team sent to a particular Location, depending on the size and geographic dispersement of the Location, and the identified issues to be resolved there.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Deputy Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide leadership in coordinating the CARE Program.• Provide resources in the form of a Program Manager and clerical support.
CARE Program Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish CARE Program Management Plan and Schedule.• Coordinate and interact with Area/Location Program Managers, DAAFM, AFM Divisions, Area Directors, and Deputy Area Directors.• Evaluate and select CARE Team members.• Recommend and select CARE Team leaders.• Provide leadership and guidance to the CARE Teams through:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Team building- Objective/goal setting- Established review procedures- Resource allocation- Consolidation of findings.• Report accomplishments/findings/and trends to the DAAFM, ADs, AFM Divisions and DADs via CARE e-Survey and Functional Questions.• Keep AFM Division Directors and DADs informed on progress.• Report limited review assurances to FMD and responsible AFM Division.• Represent the CARE Program at conferences and meetings.
AFM Division Directors/DADs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nominate CARE Team members.• Provide functional expertise to CARE Teams.• Provide reference material (regulations, policy, procedures, etc.).• Incorporate changes in P&P's consistent with findings regarding gaps.• Provide assistance to resolve issues identified in CARE reports.• Develop consolidated Action Plan to address report findings.• Follow-up on report findings to ensure that action items are resolved.
CARE Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide on-site leadership to review team members.• Lead opening conference.• Consolidate review findings and report

accomplishments/findings to the CARE Program Manager.

- CARE Team Members
- Actively participate in CARE Team meetings.
 - When selected, actively participate in on-site reviews.
 - Willingly share techniques, processes, and ideas on accomplishing quality administrative support.
 - Actively recognize and document best practices for improving administrative processes.
 - Provide advice and assistance to those reviewed.
 - Suggest changes to processes that will improve the quality of administrative support.
 - Draft appropriate sections of the report.

V. REVIEWS

Reviews will be scheduled each year according to the following cycle of CARE reviews per Area per year:

Beltsville	1
Mid South	1
Midwest	1
North Atlantic	1
Northern Plains	2
Pacific West	3
South Atlantic	2
Southern Plains	2
Area Office	1

No member of a CARE Team shall be from the Area in which the Location for review is located.

A report of the findings/recommendations will be completed and submitted to the DAD and Location management through the DAAFM within 6-7 weeks of the on-site review.

VI. RESOURCES

The AFM Divisions and DADs shall provide travel and support services for their respective representatives.

Travel expenses for Location representatives and the cost of meeting facilities will be from funds made available by the DAAFM.

James H. Bradley
Deputy Administrator, AFM

Date